

PART 6: CLAIMS FOR REIMBURSEMENT

1. Preparing to File a Travel Voucher

A. When to File Travel Vouchers?

Employees must submit travel claims for all official travel in accordance with administrative procedures. Travel vouchers should be submitted within five working days after completion of the trip or period of travel, or every thirty days if the employee is in a continuous travel status. Employees involved in a transfer of station should submit vouchers after each phase of the move.

To facilitate funds control, FSA personnel authorized to travel on type A, B, or N travel authorizations should make every effort to file travel vouchers no later than 5 calendar days after the close of the last month in the semiannual period covered by the travel authorization and 5 calendar days after the close of the month at fiscal yearend. The last voucher filed for travel during the semiannual period should be designated as such by marking the word "FINAL," in red, in the upper right hand corner of all copies of the travel voucher.

B. Receipt Requirements

All expenses must be documented on the travel voucher. Receipts are required for allowable cash expenditures in excess of \$75, plus any applicable tax. Receipts **are** required for the following expenditures regardless of amount:

- Lodging
- Common carrier transportation (plane, train, car rental)
- Laundry, cleaning, and pressing of clothing (Part 7, Paragraph 2A)
- Excess baggage (Part 7, Paragraph 4)

C. Which Form to Use

- AD-616/Travel Voucher (TDY Travel) for FSA GS employees
- AD-616/Travel Voucher (TDY Travel) for all CO employees COC members as of October 1, 2003

D. Fraudulent Claims

False claims will result in forfeiture of the claim. In addition, there are criminal provisions under which severe penalties may be imposed (18 U.S.C. 287 and 1001). The employee is also subject to potential disciplinary action.

E. Payment of Late Fees

As of May 1, 2000, travelers who submit a proper travel voucher to their approving official and are not paid within 30 calendar days after the approving official receives the proper voucher, will be paid a late fee.

The approving official should record the date that a travel voucher is received for payment in the "Date Approved" field on the AD-616. If there are no errors on the voucher, the approving official should sign off on the voucher and submit it for payment. If errors are discovered, the approving official must notify the traveler of those errors and provide reasons why the voucher will not be paid within 7 calendar days after receipt. The traveler should then correct the voucher and resubmit it for approval and payment. If a proper voucher has been submitted and payment does not occur within 30 calendar days, the employee is then entitled to a late fee payment which is calculated using the prevailing Prompt Payment Act Interest Rate beginning on the 31st calendar day after submission of the voucher and ending on the date on which payment is made. The late payment fee is considered interest income for the recipient and will be reported to the IRS.

2. Preparing AD-616

A. Information Required on AD-616

Form AD-616 is used to claim reimbursement for official travel expenses through the NFC Online Travel System. The following information is needed on the form:

- The dates of all departures and arrivals.
- A chronological itemization of official expenses incurred.
- Date and time of leave status. Show "leave" at the top of the voucher to identify it for audit by NFC

Instructions for completion of the AD-616 can be found in the NFC Procedures Manual.

B. Supporting Documents

Attach these documents to the completed AD-616:

- AD-202 and all amendments

Note: Only the first travel voucher submitted under a Type A, B, L, or N authorization needs a copy of AD-202 attached. Future travel vouchers must reference the AD-202 number and indicate that the AD-202 was previously submitted.

- Receipts, as required by paragraph 1 above
- Used ticket receipts, passenger coupons

C. Certifications

Both the traveler and approving official should sign the travel voucher certifying that all entries have been reviewed and verified as reasonable in accordance with travel regulations. Original signatures are required.

D. Approving Officials for Travel Vouchers

Travel vouchers should be approved by the same official (may be two different people serving at different times in the same position, such as an "acting" official) as the official approving the travel authorization. **Exception:** For officials traveling on Types A, B, or N authorizations, the official designated to sign Type C authorizations may also sign vouchers for Type A, B, or N travelers.

E. Approving Own Travel Expenses

No traveler is authorized to approve their own travel vouchers.

F. Distributing Copies of AD-616

Following submission to NFC for payment, the original travel voucher and all receipts and supporting documents should be returned to the traveler for retention. National office FSA employees must send copies of the travel vouchers, as well as travel authorizations, to FMD's International Accounting & Exports Programs Branch, Attn: Pete Hogan.

G. Record Retention

All employees are required to keep copies of all travel vouchers and supporting documentation for a 6-year, 3-month period as prescribed by the National Archives and Records Administration under General Records Schedule 6, Paragraph 1.

For employees who mail paper transactions to NFC for processing, the official record is the paper form. NFC is the official record keeper of these paper transactions and retains these forms for the retention period.

For employees who electronically enter their travel transactions, the official record is the electronic record submitted to NFC for processing. However, the employee in this case, is responsible for keeping a paper record of the transactions for the required retention period. NFC system-generated paper facsimiles and/or the official Departmental travel forms satisfy the retention requirements. Each transaction must bear the original signatures of the traveler and/or approving official, as applicable and supporting documentation, such as receipts, must be attached.

H. Post Payment Audit

All TDY travel vouchers are subject to post payment audits conducted by NFC. If a voucher that has been entered on the NFC Online Travel System is selected for audit, NFC will mail a report to the approving official and the traveler requesting that the original voucher, with all attachments, be mailed to NFC for audit. After the audit, NFC assumes the responsibility of official record keeper and retains the paper documents for the remainder of the record retention period.

I. Disallowance of a Travel Claim

Payment of items claimed on travel vouchers may be disallowed when expenses are not properly itemized, documentation required to support claims is not provided, or employees claim expenses that were not authorized.

If an expense is disallowed by an Agency approving official prior to the voucher being sent to NFC, an employee may request reconsideration of the claim by submitting a written request to FMD supported by facts or documentation which support the claim.

If the claim is disallowed by NFC, a letter will be sent to the employee with information regarding the disallowance as well as instructions for filing a reclaim voucher. If the claim is still denied after reconsideration, an employee may submit the claim for adjudication to the GSA Board of Contract Appeals in accordance with 48 CFR part 6104.